

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the consideration of the present application afforded by the Examiner. Claims 1-30 remain pending. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0137886 to Ross et al. ("Ross") in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,071,842 to Brady, Jr. ("Brady, Jr."). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that Ross does not qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). The present application claims right of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 based on Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-281509 filed in Japan on September 26, 2002. The earliest effective priority date afforded the Ross reference is November 22, 2002. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that the subject matter of the present invention as claimed was conceived and/or reduced to practice prior to November 22, 2002, as evidenced by the declaration submitted under 37 CFR § 1.131 on August 18, 2006.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1-30 based on Ross be withdrawn.

In view of the above remarks, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Notice of same is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mr. John R. Sanders, Reg. No. 60,166 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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